



**PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

March 22, 2016

7:00 p.m.

The George Howard Building  
3430 Court House Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043

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**AGENDA**

1. Approval of the February 23, 2015 Minutes
2. Announcements
3. Public Comment
4. Old Business
  - RTA bus replacement
  - RTA driver retention
  - Development review
  - Upcoming, agendas/ speakers
5. New Business
  - Bicycle Plan
6. Adjournment

Future PTB Meetings Dates

- April 26, 2016
- May 24, 2016
- June 28, 2016
- July 26, 2016
- September 27, 2016
- October 25, 2016

For confirmation, please contact the Office of Transportation at 410-313-3130.



**PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION BOARD MINUTES**

March 22, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.

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**Members Present:** Ron Hartman, Chair  
Jason Quan  
Astamay Curtis  
Alice Giles  
Larry Schoen

**Staff Present:** Clive Graham, Executive Secretary  
John Ainsley, Recording Secretary  
Chris Eatough, Bike/Ped Coordinator

**Excused:** Hector Garcia  
Earl Armiger

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1. **Approval of the February 23, 2016, Minutes**

The Minutes were approved by a vote of 4-0. Mr. Schoen abstained from the vote.

2. **Announcements**

There were no current announcements.

3. **Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

4. **Old Business**

**RTA Bus Replacement (Update)**

Mr. Graham stated that he felt bus replacement was the number one priority which would, in turn, improve future RTA service. Mr. Graham advised that the Office of Transportation (OoT) had met that day with the County Executive regarding the OoT budget. The Executive appeared supportive of the request for bus replacement using the lease option to procure 17 new buses. The replace buses would ideally be 35 foot medium duty buses with a 350,000 mile life (12 year life). Using the lease option, the buses would be paid off in ten years (lease to own).

Mr. Graham said he presented the above replacement lease plan at the RTA partners meeting on March 15, 2016. Both Prince George's and Anne Arundel counties agreed that lease to own seemed the best option to procure the new buses for the system but would have to refer the decision back to their respective elected/appointed officials for approval.

Mr. Hartman inquired about the partner process and the cost of payment for the lease. Mr. Graham advised that there are currently three separate Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with the partners that will expire on June 30, 2016. The current effort is to have one MOU that all partners would sign to streamline future decisions and be in place when the proposed RTA Commission is seated. Mr. Graham said that Howard County would pay its 70% of the cost of buses and the partners would pay the balance with their shares of contributions. The plan is to order the buses prior to July 1, 2016 and the expected delivery the following July in 2017. Howard County's funding of this order would be "new effort" in the proposed operating budget.

Mr. Pritchard advised that three electric buses are scheduled to be delivered in September 2016. One charging station will be installed at the RTA Transit Facility while the second will be located at the Columbia Mall. RTS intends to use the buses on the Green Route 401 service. David Cookson of the OoT is the project manager for the electric bus project and will be attending a future PTB meeting to update the Board with more details.

Mr. Graham advised the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) has awarded Howard and Anne Arundel Counties a grant to create a Transit Development Plan (TDP). The MTA has hired a consultant who will help review the RTA's transit routes as they have not been reviewed for several years. Another consultant will be developing a fleet management plan that will also address how to fund the purchase of new buses.

### **RTA Driver Retention**

Mr. Pritchard of the Regional Transportation Agency reported that turnover rates at the RTA have been very high during the last two years; over 50%. The RTA currently is holding a training class of five and plans to hold a 2nd training program in April to secure more RTA drivers. Based on past experience, of the drivers in training approximately half are hired. Mr. Pritchard said he would keep the board informed at future meetings regarding driver retention.

Mr. Hartman requested a snapshot of the RTA's key performance indicators so that the PTB could be better informed about issues such as driver retention. Mr. Graham advised that others were asking for similar indicators. A draft performance report was given at the partners meeting last week and is being honed down to be more be useful for multiple purposes.

### **Development Review**

Development review was not discussed at this meeting.

## **Upcoming, Agenda/ Speakers**

The board discussed agenda topics for upcoming PTB meetings. The Board requested the April meeting include a presentation on Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and the Electric Bus Projects. The Board also requested if possible to have a representative from Montgomery County to attend and provide an update on their activities. The Board requested the May meeting be a presentation on Development Review & the Transit Development Plan. Mr. Hartman said he would enquire if the MTA might be available for the June meeting to present on suburban bus operations and plans.

## **5. New Business**

### **Bicycle Plan**

Chris Eatough (OoT) presented an update and summary of the Howard County Bicycle Master Plan. (See attached presentation following the minutes). The Plan's goals and objectives are:

- Identify and develop countywide system of bicycle facilities to foster connectivity within and between the following: villages, communities and neighborhoods throughout the County, as well as neighboring cities and counties, parks and recreation centers, schools and educational institutions, commercial and employment centers, and regional and local transit facilities.
- Facilitate recreational and transportation trips by bicycle in the County and improve safety for all types of bicyclists.
- Recommend County policies that will support bicycling, including bikeway facility design.
- Build public support for implementation of the Plan.

The full Bike Master Plan is available at the following link: <http://bikehoward.com/>

Mr. Schoen recommended a letter of endorsement from the PTB be sent to the County Council supporting the Bicycle Master Plan and to recommend denial of amendments that would eliminate any segment of the Plan before further study. The Board agreed to forward a letter of endorsement of the plan to the County Council for its upcoming April 4, 2016 work session.

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6. **Adjournment**

Mr. Hartman adjourned the meeting at 8:10 pm. The next Public Transportation Board meeting is scheduled for **April 26, 2016 at 7:00 pm.**

*Clive Graham*

4/8/16

Clive Graham  
Executive Secretary

Date

*John Ainsley*

4/8/16

John Ainsley  
Recording Secretary

Date